

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

December 4, 2001

**7:00 PM
Aldermanic Chambers
City Hall (3rd Floor)**

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman O'Neil.

A moment of silent prayer is observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Sysyn, Pinard, O'Neil, Lopez,
Shea, Vaillancourt, Pariseau, Cashin, Thibault, Cashin, Hirschmann

Absent: Alderman Levasseur

Alderman Clancy being deceased, there was no representation for Ward 5.

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

John St. Hilaire, 99 Murphy Street, Manchester stated:

I am here representing the Queen City Trail Alliance, which is the Rails for Trails program that started back in January. I started out opposing the Shaws Supermarket. Not opposing Shaws but opposing the access from South Beech Street. After a lot of talking, talking to some of the Aldermen and to the Mayor and to Mr. Beaudoin and having a number of meetings with Mr. Beaudoin and our committee and going over a lot of different details and problems that we showed him that were not being addressed and looking at his plan, we really looked at it and decided that it was not a bad thing that they were doing and it was actually a good thing. They are not going to add traffic. They already have a road there, Spring Garden Road. If there is no access from the back, Spring Garden Road would be used as an access, but it would add more traffic to South Willow Street. Shaws has proven

itself to date to be a good neighbor. In the talks with them, he asked what needed to be done. I told him that they had to address the traffic problems that weren't going to be addressed on South Beech Street but that were going to hit Mitchell Street, Dewey Street, Flint Street and some of the side streets and cross over streets. He acknowledged that he didn't even think of those as a problem when he started this project when they did the traffic counts. I told him that the trail was a very, very important asset, not only to the South end of Manchester but when it is finally completed to the whole of Manchester and he agreed. He went out with his engineers and he walked the trail. He drove the streets. He went to Mitchell Street. He did a manual traffic count. They are doing a complete traffic count now. The committee and a lot of people who we had initially sign petitions against putting...because originally we thought they wanted to put a whole road back there, are now for Shaws. They addressed Mitchell Street and said do you want a light, what do you need, whatever we have to do to mitigate the traffic in that area is not a problem. The trail...I asked them why not help us with the trail and why not take care of the trail from Gold Street to South Beech Street and make that a Feldco project. He agreed to go from Nutt's Pond to South Beech Street. That is a huge step and money that doesn't have to come from the City for a trailway that is in everybody's best interest. So, he has been acting in real good faith. The plan that they have, the land that they have is already zoned commercial. Shaws does not need to rezone anything to put in its particular plan, but if they don't go in there, that land is already zoned commercial and there is another commercial entity that is going to go in there and that will scare me even more.

Bruce Connell, 358 Mitchell Street, Manchester stated:

Just before I start, John referred to a petition and the petition that I am referring to is a separate one totally. I was involved in that first one and this is a new petition that was started about three weeks ago. When I started, I started representing a handful of neighbors in South Manchester. I am pleased to announce that I am representing a newly formed organization called "Citizens for South Manchester." The committee members represent established groups already in South Manchester. We had our first meeting last night and we came together and came up with a mission statement and objectives as to what we are going to be all about. I was preparing to come here tonight with my issues, but they gave me a mandate as to what they feel is good for South Manchester and what should be done. On Sunday afternoon I stopped by each of your homes and dropped off a letter with signed petitions with almost 300 citizens signing their names on them. I believe that there are actually 310 as we speak. My views are well documented in a letter that I sent you, however, the Citizens for South Manchester committee asked me to focus on the issue of the access road that is planned from South Beech Street to the supermarket and shopping center. We don't want it period. We are not against Shaws and we are not against development. I think we need another supermarket. I don't think there is anyone in this room that would disagree with that. We feel that an access road as described will increase traffic on an already over burdened neighborhood. Any amount to mitigate this would not work. Increased traffic will result from this access road on both nights and weekends endangering

the health and safety of our neighbors and children. I don't propose to be an expert on traffic issues, nor do I propose to be a polling expert, but I do have a firm grasp on the obvious. There are many people here tonight that are opposed to this access road and the rezoning and they have not signed up because we didn't want to take up your time. At this time I would just ask for a show of hands from the people behind me who are against the rezoning and against the access road. I have an explanation of this poster that I have in front of you. This shows where the petitions were secured. There are 180 of them there. It doesn't have all of them. It shows that it is not only in our particular area where this access road is coming out, but it does spread out to the whole area of South Beech Street. The reason we did that is we understand that there was a poll taken from residents of South Beech Street that said that they were in favor of this access road and this supermarket. I think we are all in favor of the supermarket, don't get me wrong here. I want a supermarket. I don't want the access road and I want to make that clear and our neighbors have made that clear in this petition. They have given their names, addresses and their telephone number. You can check them. I have yet to see this telephone poll and I have yet to meet a person who said they were polled. I am sure they were but I have not met one and I am from South Manchester and have been for 40 years.

Jan Spaulding, 61 Gold Street, Manchester stated:

I just want to express my opinion because I know you value it so about the new Shaws. We are for it but we are just afraid, as he is, about the access road on South Beech Street and also being packed on Gold Street. As we know, about a year ago Gold Street was looked at and the problems they had on that street. To this day, nothing has been addressed. It has been kind of pushed to the side and we would like to see that brought up again. I just feel that if people are going to this new market and coming out on South Beech Street, I believe they are going to come down South Beech and head down Gold Street. I really believe that. If they have access to South Willow, I don't think that they are going to take a right onto South Willow to get back down in further in Manchester because South Willow can be a real nightmare. We just want to make sure that Gold Street is brought up again and the issues addressed that really need to be addressed, which is the width of the street, the increased traffic and the speed itself. If you could possibly bring that back up, it would be great to be involved with all of that and get Gold Street going again.

Diane Connell, 358 Mitchell Street, Manchester stated:

I very much want to make it clear that I am not opposed to having a new supermarket in the area. We all agree that that is what we need. What I am opposed to is the fact that of having an access road to South Beech Street and access to the railroad bed. I really believe that the railroad right-of-way should be kept for other uses and not be paved over for a road. There are so many things...I saw Dean Kamen's presentation on the Segway yesterday. What immediately came to my mind was what a great opportunity to build a people mover from the Airport to the center of town so that you could have a rental Segway office at the Airport. They could rent a Segway, run down to the center of town, drop the Segway off and do their

business, get back on the Segway, head back to the Airport, hop a plane and get out of here. What a great opportunity. Let's be visionaries. Let's not just start paving that railroad to get more commercialization on South Willow Street. As soon as you pave a little bit of that railroad bed, every other company along that railroad is going to say well you let them have a little bit why can't we have a little bit. The next thing you know, that whole railroad is going to be paved from Gold Street down to South Beech. Let's be visionaries. Let's plan for the future.

Harold Levine, 49 Hillcroft Road, Manchester stated:

I know that very good things we read today in the papers is good news, especially as far as some of the things that are taking place. It is not good news about Notre Dame College, but the good news I read was in yesterday's paper when my Alderman, Ted Gatsas, out of all of the Aldermen proposed, with a great deal of the citizens in Manchester to make sure that the City tries to obtain the building on Westbrook and Elm Street that Notre Dame just fixed up over the last few years. I believe there are three levels. I have checked with people from the School Department and I think there are three levels. You could make one level for a senior center. You have plenty of parking and you could have some offices for the City and possibly we, meaning the School Department, is still leasing out about 40% of the building at 555 Auburn Street, the Easter Seal building and we are paying them somewhere in the vicinity of \$100,000 a year. Well that would go a long way if you moved that operation, the preschool, into that particular building also. Just the \$100,000 would take care of paying off the mortgage or the bond for it. Most of the things the taxpayers of Manchester keep reading in the paper the last couple of weeks is very negative, especially what is going on at Singer Park with the stage. It seems we have a City Solicitor's Office that doesn't protect the taxpayers of Manchester. They must think we have a very deep pocket and this has been going on for years. It seems that for most of the people a lot of these positions are political appointments and not chosen because they are the right people. I could keep going on but I can see that my time is running very short. I will finish up by wishing you all a happy and healthy New Year and to the gentlemen who are retiring from the Aldermanic Board lots of luck. It has been a pleasure over the last 10 years sparring with you people verbally. Thank you.

Trina Alexknovitch, 377 South Beech Street, Manchester stated:

I hear from my neighbors try living off of South Beech Street. I have been passed by cars over that solid line and mind you the speed limit is 30 MPH. I was almost hit going to get my mail at the mailbox. My neighbor across the street was making a left-hand turn to get into his driveway and an impatient driver tried to go around him to the right, which is where I am at my mailbox. There have been very few weeks where I have not almost been rear ended trying to turn into my own driveway as I am heading north onto South Beech Street. I bought my house seven years ago. I accepted the fact that I was going to live on a fairly main thoroughfare. In those seven years, the traffic has gotten progressively worse. You cannot enter Brown Avenue from 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM because you are just going to sit in

line in the traffic. I have seen that happen. I grew up in Hudson and I have lived in this State my entire life. I am all for progress. I am not against Shaws going in. I do not want an access road that is going to bring much more traffic to South Beech Street. I would like the safety of being able to pull into my own driveway without hearing brakes squealing in back of me because somebody doesn't like 30 MPH or they think that they can get around me on the sidewalk and then too late find out they can't do that. I hear my neighbors who live off of South Beech Street and they are just as concerned about the traffic. I invite anybody to come to my house at 7:30 AM to try to pull out of my driveway onto South Beech Street and see how long that takes or any time after 4:30 PM trying to get into my driveway heading south or heading north safely without almost being rear ended.

Kathy Philbert, 176 Laurel Street, Manchester stated:

I live smack in the center City. I have lived there all my life, which means that it is 50+ years. Because downtown employees have always parked in our neighborhood to avoid paying to park and I certainly don't blame them for that, resident parking has always been an issue for us and one that my neighborhood studied over 10 years ago. We quickly decided that permit only parking was not a viable solution because we have company, we have repair men, we have children who come home to visit occasionally now that they are married and living elsewhere and they need a place to park and not just for two hours either. We decided many years ago that it was easier to live with the full street and work with our neighbors and friends downtown rather than to deal with permit parking because of the can of worms that it would open. Well lo and behold my particular block has not been blessed with permit parking, however, my father-in-law's has been and for the 90 year old man who can't walk several blocks to visit his brother, who by the way never owned a car so would never be issued a permit to park, or for the daughter who gives up her lunch hour to go in and check on her frail mom but can't find a place to park, another day with permit only parking is not a solution. I understand that you are working on it, but I want to make sure that I say to this Board tonight that putting metered parking in and telling us, wink-wink, you can feed the meters, which we know is illegal, is not a solution to me because I believe that when you pass an ordinance and when we are teaching our children to be good citizens, we try to teach them that every law has to be obeyed every time, not just when it is convenient and if you don't like the law then work through the system to change it. Don't tell me that you can put a meter up that says that we have to move our vehicle off the block after two hours and then, wink-wink, we won't enforce it. That is not the way to raise good citizens. I would like you to consider that and I would also like to say that I had been to Enright Park for the first time and I was devastated at the condition that the park was paid for when there are three huge puddles in the basketball court. There is not one swing for a toddler and a good quarter of the park is nothing but a dangerous area with a drop off with nothing on it to play. Before I leave tonight because I hope I don't have to come back in two weeks, I would like to offer a sincere thank you to Mr. Cashin for all of his years of service. Thank you very much.

Alderman Sysyn stated I just wanted to let you know that we did address residential parking in the Traffic Committee tonight. We don't have parking meters that we can use now. We are going to have two-hour parking for now on those streets and those signs will come down.

Ms. Philbert asked does that solve the problem where we are limited to two-hour visits.

Alderman Sysyn answered no but actually if he had parking meters and it said 10 hour parking, somebody could feed that meter for four or five hours.

Robert Duval, 120 Kennard Road, Manchester stated:

I am here this evening because I was asked by Mr. Connell's group as a traffic engineer to review a traffic study that was prepared by Shaws in support of their application. I would just like to make a couple of observations. My review was somewhat brief, but I feel that report may significantly under estimate the traffic that both exists out on South Willow Street and South Beech Street at this time, as well as the traffic generation that can be expected from this proposal so I would suggest that the Board not act at this point until more definitive data has been presented. The traffic data that I saw estimated approximately 840 trips for example and I believe the appropriate number is perhaps as much as 50% more than that depending on how you classify this particular shopping center. In addition, as we all know South Willow Street is a commercial area with a high amount of retail space presently. By adding significantly more retail space to South Willow Street, you increase peak hour traffic, retail traffic and in addition a significant part of traffic planning takes account of what is called pass by trips. Those are trips that are already on the roadway for another purpose that are diverted to this use and don't really add to the roadway burden. To the extent that you don't have mixed zoning, that is a mix of industrial and commercial and residential, chances are a higher and higher proportion of people are there for a single use only so the likelihood that the pass by trips will actually be there becomes less. Everybody will go to South Willow Street strictly for retail purposes. So it is important and I think the Board should carefully consider this rezoning, which would tend to make a more homogeneous use out there on South Willow Street carefully and that these traffic numbers have a chance to be re-evaluated before you act.

Donald Renney, 81 Dorchester Street, Manchester stated:

I would like to begin by just saying that originally I was opposed to the Shaws development going in but after being at several meetings and hearings and so forth, I have showed quite a bit of interest in this seeing as how I bid the property. Getting the correct information was the most important to me and I believe that the Shaws development people have been very straightforward. They have answered the citizen's questions. They have offered to come to our homes and show us the layout in person. It doesn't appear to me that they are hiding anything at this point. They are also offering us up to \$40,000 towards 27 feet of trail, which would definitely be in the best interest of Manchester. As far as the traffic is concerned, I believe the South end has been overly traveled for many years and was poorly put together

but at the same time this City is in a critical need of tax revenue so I do believe that Shaws is in the right area at the right time. As far as Spring Garden Avenue goes, it is already there so the access road I really don't feel is going to be that much of a problem down the road. Providing that Shaws keeps up their end of the deal, I believe the citizens from the South end of Manchester are going to benefit from this. My only great concern would be the domino effect as far as any other companies and changing rezoning goes. I wouldn't want to see anyone else taking any more portions of the railroad track.

Bob Menafra, 60 Bosse Avenue, Manchester stated:

I have been before you over the last year or so. I am one of the original members of Voices and Choices that chose the project of turning the railbed into a recreational path for Manchester residents. That is our pet project. I do not oppose Shaws opening. I do not oppose their access road on the back road. As a matter of fact, my wife has informed me that if I oppose Shaws in any way I ought to look for a good lawyer. I do not oppose the rear access to Shaws. The fact that they use up 200 feet or so of the railbed is not an issue with me. If our dream happens and the three-mile length of railbed from the Manchester Airport down to the civic center becomes a reality as a pedestrian bike path, the 200 feet or so of access to Shaws is not an issue. We would have to cross South Beech somewhere eventually. Why not do it there where there will probably be a light to help people cross South Beech and get to the other side and then we have Queen City Avenue to deal with. I ask the Board members, those of you who will be here next term and those of you who are not for a variety of reasons, to show some vision and picture the City of Manchester five, ten or twenty years from now and to keep this unique property, this three mile long linear park, it has a three mile entrance on one side and a three mile long entrance on the other side...it is a totally, completely unique property in Manchester, to keep it in one piece and to not pave it over. Some day the South end of Manchester will be nothing but blacktop and this 66 foot wide three mile long strip of green will be an asset that is priceless. To those of you who are leaving after this term, I wish you well and I thank you for your years of service to the City.

Mayor Baines recessed the meeting to call the regular meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to order.

Billy Dodd, 181 Mammoth Road, Manchester stated:

To echo the last speaker's sentiments, for those who are going to be leaving the Board, I know that it has taken a lot of dedication and commitment for the time that you served be it short or long and I want to go along with the City in thanking you for making that commitment. I have been listening to what has been going on here with Shaws. There is nothing wrong with Shaws going in. Keep in mind that the Hanover Street shopping center operates with one entrance and this one can do it also. It is kind of funny to see some people that were adamantly against the railroad bed turning into a road now all of the sudden in favor of it. Keep in mind that if you let that go through no neighborhood is safe. Any neighborhood will be open to be commercialized like that. Another thing, parking. It seems

like the civic center has been getting a lot of coverage in the paper about parking. I think you are going to find out that it is going to come back to bite you right in the butt. You have to go all the way back to May of 1997 when a secret deal was made with Ogden Entertainment for parking revenues that nobody knew about when they voted for the civic center. If you keep secrets, they are going to come back to bite you in the butt. Keep that in mind. Another thing, down in the Millyard and I talked to you about it before and maybe you can think about it for next year or the year after, a lot of people from all over the state go to Portsmouth to Strawberry Banke to see the flowers. The wives take their husbands along and they end up going shopping and whatever else. Down in the Millyard you have your riverwalk and you are going to be working on it. Get something like Strawberry Banke has with the flowers down there. You have a big parking lot, utilize it. Thank you.

David DeBaiy, Andover, MA stated:

I am a registered professional traffic operations engineer. I am employed by Vanesse Associations and engaged by the proponents of the project for the Shaws or if you will the shopping center at Manchester Commons. I won't make a full presentation now. Obviously two minutes wouldn't allow that but I would like to offer a comment or two. One is that the work that we have done is work that would have us go out and take traffic counts and refer to the planning agencies and the like in order to be assured that we are working with the right numbers. That is to say what are the vehicles that we would see out there and what is the expectation for the future. The work that we do and the work that we have submitted to the City is also work that we have submitted to the state. There is a three-part process that the state has in looking at a piece of work like this. The first part is that the planning department takes a look at the numbers that are included and looks at and scrutinizes those numbers to determine whether or not they are, in fact, reasonable numbers. It is a test of the facility that we are trying to make here, a hypothetical test. The second step would be to look at the specific design; the mitigation that has been included in the report as well. During that first step and that is the only step that has been completed by the state, they have in fact looked at the numbers and identified that those numbers are reasonable. It has gone on to the second step where the design of the mitigation is being looked at presently. That mitigation, of course, is three-fold. There are improvements to the front door on South Willow Street. There are improvements along South Willow Street in order to be assured that traffic can move freely from say the Beech Street area down to the front door at South Lincoln Street and up the street in that area. In addition to that, of course, there is the rear access on South Beech Street. Comments have been made in fear that there is, in fact, a radical increase in traffic that might result because that access is there but in fact if you look closely at the study that has been done you will see that there isn't truly a change. Those patrons who would be coming from the South on South Beech Street would use Spring Garden to get to the roadway. So if there is a South Beech Street access or not, that same traffic would be there.

Gene Beaudoin, Manchester NH stated:

First of all I would like to say thank you for the long process that we put you through and thank you to a lot of the neighbors who have let us come into their homes. As for the two-minute rule, if my wife ever finds out that I have adhered to a two-minute rule I am really in trouble. A couple of answers to a couple of points. First of all tonight we are really talking about trying to relocate two businesses onto the South end of the Donovan property and that is why we need the property rezoned. Dick Horn is here from Precision Auto and Tom Swadowski from Sterling Auto. All we are trying to do is relocate them in a new building. That is the purpose of the rezoning. The second purpose of the rezoning is to allow A-Market, the health food and vitamin store, to expand when they come in next year. That wouldn't be allowed because the zone line currently splits their property. That is the purpose of the rezoning. A couple of facts and answers to questions. First of all pave over the right-of-way is certainly not anything we are proposing. We are proposing to pave 10 feet of a 100-foot wide right-of-way for a rails to trails project that would go from our rear entrance way to Nutt's Pond. It is 100 feet wide and we are proposing to pave 10 feet. In the area where we will also have a rear entrance drive, there will be an additional 20 feet paved so it the maximum amount of pavement will be 30 feet out of a possible 100 feet leaving ample room for a light rail system at some later time or a Segway system or whatever at some point or time. I need to tell you that I think we have listened as best we could out in the neighborhood. We listened at South Beech and heard that the problems were in terms of volumes of traffic and speed and that is why we have offered to spend the \$100,000 for the traffic light at the corner of Mitchell and South Beech Street. I have also listened to Shaws and they have basically said to us make sure you get the rear entrance because we want to keep the customer from having to go out Spring Garden into the shopping center and back north to get into the neighborhood that they are trying to serve. It used to be in the days of a hot economy that \$300,000 in new taxes didn't matter and 500 new jobs didn't matter but from where we sit and from where Shaws sits, they would really like to be a part of this community and contribute those taxes and provide for those new jobs.

Jim Bingham, Manchester NH stated:

I am the Director of the Manchester School-to-Careers Partnership and I wish I had someone give me a Segway because I am going to talk about something a little bit different than Shaws. For the past three years, Manchester's School-to-Careers Partnership, in cooperation with the Manchester School District has been placing teachers and guidance counselors from the Manchester School District at area businesses and government organizations for a few weeks during the summer so they can have direct experience of the modern workplace. As workers, these educators learned valuable tasks, kept journals, gained first hand knowledge of the responsibilities and expectations required in today's work environment and identified those skills necessary to be successful in one's career or occupation. Upon completion of this work experience, each teacher developed and submitted a study unit or lesson plan for their class or discipline that would engage the students in learning about those necessary skills

identified by the teacher as vital to today's job market. Not only content and technical knowledge, but such skills as teamwork and communication, effective allocation of time and resources and problem-solving skills. The culmination of these past three years of this initiative resides in this booklet of over 100 pages of lesson plans and curriculum units highlighting career-based skills. On Tuesday, December 6, the Manchester School-to-Careers Partnership is holding a book signing ceremony at the public library. We will be presenting a master copy to the Superintendent of Schools and every school and library will also receive a copy. I just wanted to point this out to the distinguished Board that some very nice and good things are happening in the School District for the students and that we are very pleased about the success of this project and hope to continue with future projects.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

There being no further business to come before the special meeting, on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk